

The American Guardian Association: Aims and Achievements

Treasurer John L. Headington of the directorate of the American chamber of commerce is the president this year of the American Guardian Association, succeeding C. S. Salmon. The association, with Mrs. Flora N. Gregg as secretary, carries on an essential work in the care of a considerable group of boys and girls whose fathers or mothers were Americans. For want of money, the ranks of this group were not widened last year and it is not planned to widen them this year. The association enjoys no permanent endowment, the resources it is able to marshal from year to year can not be stretched by sentiment to cover more than a limited amount of practical work.

This association was one of the last humanitarian efforts of one of America's greatest humanitarians, Leonard Wood. Inaugurated governor general of the Philippines in October 1921, he had hardly been in office a month when, on November 18, 1921, the association was founded at his instance and was able to announce an initial capital of ₱9,977.81 derived from membership fees of ₱10 a year and from contributions. It was during trips through the provinces as the head of the Wood-Forbes probing commission that General Wood had come upon many appealing instances of children of American fathers growing up in bad environments or in straightened poverty. Finding that the society loosely organized that then gave some attention to the problems these children presented was inadequate to its obligations, he suggested the organization of the guardian association.

Gordon Johnston, close to Wood personally and a member of his advisory staff, took charge of the organization of the association and relied greatly on the American chamber of commerce for assistance. Wood's name was joined to the association as honorary president, by-laws of the association confer this office on governors general of the islands during their tenures of office—Governor General Frank Murphy, another exemplary humanitarian, is accordingly the present honorary president of the association.

The treasury of the association has in it about ₱18,000. Receipts during 1933 were ₱8,914.17 and disbursements ₱9,237. Administrative expense runs ₱290 a month and is about 1/3 of the yearly total outlay. It is low because of the low rent charged at the Fernandez building and the landlord's donation of janitor's services. Of trust funds the association had in bank at the close of last year ₱53,060.82. Largest trust is the Mary Rose Burgess fund; the Burgess legacy fell to her and her brother, who has since died, and at her majority she will come into the custody of the whole proceeds of her father's estate less what the association has spent meanwhile for her support and education.

The health of the association's wards is carefully looked after, all receive thorough physical examination at the outset of each year. Doctors and dentists contribute their services. Mrs. Leo K. Cotterman and Mrs. A. S. Heyward comprise the health committee. Last year, Dr. W. H. Waterous removed tonsils in nine cases of infection among the wards.

Dr. Venancio Afable at St. Luke's performed one appendix operation. So did Dr. N. M. Saleeby, at Baguio.

Mrs. H. M. Cavender, Mrs. Verne E. Miller, Mrs. A. S. Heyward, Mrs. A. P. Drakeford and Mrs. S. D. Rowlands are among the ladies appointed to the association's committees this year, Mrs. Miller heading the education committee. Mrs. Hilton Carson has done a great deal of active work with the association, and the cooperation of the general community has been praiseworthy.

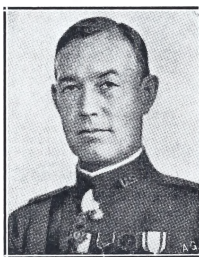
At the close of the year the association had 97 wards under its charge, 14 supported by the association, 36 by trust funds and 47 by generosity of the schools where they are being educated. Six wards, all girls, have reached the age of 18 and left the association's care under its rule not to extend support beyond that age. Of the 97 wards in its care last year, 76 were girls, 21 boys; and 80, 69 girls and 11 boys, were cared for in Manila while 17, 7 girls and 10 boys, were cared for in the provinces.

The main effort of the association is to find suitable homes for the children, after looking after their health and schooling.

Thirty-six girls are in Santa Domitilla's Vocational School: 1 is 6, 1 is 7, 1 is 8, 2 are 9, 1 is 10, 3 are 11, 4 are 12, 3 are 13, 1 is 14, 2 are 15, 2 are 16, 3 are 17, 6 are 18, 3 are 19, 1 is 20 and 1 is 21.

Sixteen wards, girls, are at Union Church Hall, the youngest 13, the oldest 20. Four are at the House of the Holy Child, 1 is 8, 1 is 11, 1 is 15 and 1 is 17. Three are at St. Anthony's Institution, 1 is 4, 2 are 12. Two are at the Hospicio de San José, 1 is 11 and 1 is 13. One, 18, is at Maryknoll convent. Two girls, sisters 12 and 15 years old, are at the School for the Deaf and Blind. One, 18, is at the girls' training school. A boy, 13, is at the Philippine Junior College; by ones and twos the others are in other schools or in the care of good families where they are assured pleasant homes. Of last year's receipts, ₱3,460 was from membership dues, ₱4,666.50 from contributions, 2 of ₱1,000 each, and the remainder from interest and other miscellaneous sources, making up the total of ₱8,914.17. More members will be sought this year.

While the association is in a sound financial condition, this is because it limits its work and takes thought of the morrow for the children already in its care. It has successfully pressed claims of children entitled to pensions, and in its capacity as guardian sees that this money goes to the welfare of the children for whom it is paid. It has established sound trusts, under the guidance of the careful business men who have managed its affairs. It is, in fact, in a position warranting endowment for its permanent support from the increment of capital placed in its charge. President Headington's influence will be especially valued because of his prominence in American-veteran activities.



GORDON JOHNSTON
Recently killed in a polo accident.
He founded the American Guardian Association at Leonard Wood's behest.